



# Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the  
Finance & Property Sub-Committee  
held on Tuesday 8th February 2022 at 7.00pm  
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors C Bartrum, E O'Driscoll, L Stark and P Symonds  
Ex Officio: Councillor J Utting (Chairman)  
In attendance: Mrs S Robson - Town Clerk  
There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

**FP22/02#01 Apologies for Absence**

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillor S Cole

**RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.**

Absent – Councillor K Fowler

**FP22/02#02 Declarations of Interest**

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

None

**FP22/02#03 Dispensations**

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

**FP22/02#04 Public Participation**

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

**FP22/02#05 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public - To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (Commercial in Confidence).**

[Public Bodies \[Admission to Meetings\] Act 1960](#)

There was no resolution to exclude members of the press and public.

**FP22/02#06 Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes**

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

*To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021*

**RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021 be signed as a correct record.**

**FP22/02#07**

**Action Review Summary**

*To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.*

- Bank account investigations – no further progress
- Prospect Gates – the Amenities staff have carried out an assessment of the gates and have included the work within the Maintenance Plan for the Spring. HC to be written to advising the Town Council accepts no liability for on-going maintenance.
- Walls maintenance – the advert on Contracts Finder had not been actioned yet

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/02#08**

**Town Clerk's Report**

*To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)*

- Market House Clock – works to repair the clock had been completed satisfactorily following a number of visits by the engineer. A recommendation for further works to be carried out had been received. Enquiries to be made to seek other quotes.
- Homs Road Car Park – Funding to the Sea Cadets had been confirmed through HC's Property Flood Resilience Recovery Support to install a system to mitigate/prevent future flooding.
- War Memorial – the grant application to the War Memorial Trust was approved and works were due to commence shortly.
- Dean Hill Park – The application to HMLR for first registration had been submitted.
- Weather Station maintenance – the Met Office had accepted the quote and painting of the tower steps would commence once the weather permits.

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/02#09**

**Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.**

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

*The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.*

The Sub-Committee was notified that the final invoice for works to Homs Road Depot had been paid. The project had been completed and the Depot and Workshop were fully operational.

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/02#10**

**Finance**

*i) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2021/2022.*

**Received and Noted**

*ii) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts.*

**Received and Noted**

**FP22/02#11**

**5 Year Plan**

*To consider the proposed 5 Year Plan for recommendation and approval to Full Council.*

Thanks were given to the Chairman for his work on drafting the Plan. The Sub-Committee was appraised of the three categories the projects had been divided into, Local Economy, Art & Culture and Wellbeing. Councillors were advised that funding in the budget would be allocated over a period of 5 years, there was some discussion regarding community consultation to canvass views on the proposals. It was agreed there should be an article in the next Council Newsletter as well as communications to local news channels.

It was proposed that a six-monthly review should be undertaken to consider potential new ideas and suggestions. A register of new projects would be kept by the Clerk for inclusion at the next review.

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Symonds

**RESOLVED – to recommend adoption of the 5-year plan to Full Council.**

**FP22/02#12**

**Budget Setting**

*To consider report from RFO and the proposed one-year budget for financial year 2022/2023 and to agree recommendations to Full Council for the budget and precept request.*

The Chairman briefed the sub-committee that he believed the proposed 2% increase showed a prudent fiscal approach and would be in line with Herefordshire Council's budget. It was recognised that with inflation currently high that a 2% rise would not keep pace with planned expenditure. However the councillors felt the budget delivered a lot for the residents, and that although it was proposed not to set a balanced budget the level of reserves could accommodate this.

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
For: 4 Against : 1

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to confirm the proposed one-year budget for financial year 2022/2023 and to agree recommendations to Full Council for the budget and precept request.**

**FP22/02#13**

**Fixed Assets**

*To receive and note the written report on Fixed Assets and consider and approve the updated register of Assets for Financial Year 2021/22 [subject to any other additions in the months to year end].*

It was proposed to defer this item until the next meeting

**FP22/02#14**

**Policies**

*To review the Council's policy on the following and agree the frequency of the review period;*

- Financial Reserves Policy [Last Reviewed February 2021]
- Annual Investment Strategy [Last Reviewed December 2020]
- Statement of Internal Control [Last Reviewed October 2020]
- Twinning Policy [Last Reviewed December 2020]

The policies were voted for en bloc

Proposed: Councillor Stark  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

**RESOLVED – to approve the proposed changes with immediate effect. It was agreed to make a recommendation to the Full Council meeting to agree to adopt a minimum level of general reserve to the equivalent value of three months net revenue expenditure.**

**FP22/02#15 Market House Working Group**  
[Councillors Lister, O’Driscoll, and Utting]  
(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

*i) To receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase*

The Chairman reported that progress with the Planning Application had stalled as Historic England had requested further investigatory and recording works be undertaken to enable them to be included with the Application for Consent.

*ii) To authorise expenditure in the sum of £1290.00 to instruct an archeologist to undertake an archaeological recording of the windows necessary for the Scheduled Monument Consent application to Historic England.*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

**RESOLVED – to approve expenditure in the sum of £1290.00 from the Market House Professional Fees Budget.**

**FP22/02#16 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item FP22/02#05 above refers)**  
**Commercial in Confidence**

*i) To receive feedback on investigations to consider options to instruct a consultant to review the Council’s Property Portfolio.*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to approve a ten minute extension to the meeting**

Feedback was given following investigations with HC’s Property Services Dept. revealed a review would not be something they could assist with. It was agreed to contact a local land agent to establish the cost of undertaking a formal review of the Council’s property portfolio.

*ii) To consider potential options for income generation at Homs Road car park*

Proposed: Councillor Symonds  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

**RESOLVED – to authorise the Clerk to make further investigations on a range of options and report back to the Sub-Committee.**

**FP22/02#17 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration**

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Item for discussion - Income generation at Homs Rd car park/Fixed Assets

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm

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Chairman

.....  
Date



# Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the  
Finance & Property Sub-Committee  
held on Tuesday 5th April 2022 at 7.00pm  
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors C Bartrum, E O'Driscoll, L Stark and P Symonds

Ex Officio: Councillor J Utting (Chairman)

In attendance: Mrs S Robson - Town Clerk

There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

**FP22/04#18**

## **Apologies for Absence**

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillor K Fowler

**RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.**

Absent – Councillor S Cole

**FP22/04#19**

## **Declarations of Interest**

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

None

**FP22/04#20**

## **Dispensations**

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

**FP22/04#21**

## **Public Participation**

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

**FP22/04#22**

**To resolve to exclude members of the press and public - To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (Commercial in Confidence).**

[Public Bodies \[Admission to Meetings\] Act 1960](#)

Proposed: Councillor Utting

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

Unanimous

**RESOLVED – that agenda item FP22/04#34 - 'Commercial in Confidence' be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.**

**FP22/04#23**

## **Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes**

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

*To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022.*

**RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 be signed as a correct record.**

**FP22/04#24**

**Action Review Summary**

*To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.*

- Bank account investigations – a formal complaint has been made to the current Bank due to numbers of cheques being returned unpaid without cause
- Prospect Gates – the Amenities staff have completed painting the gates which look much improved
- St Mary’s Closed Churchyard Wall maintenance – the advert on Contracts Finder had not been actioned yet
- Market House Lease – in progress
- Market House clock – investigations have commenced to identify a company to undertake a contract for on-going maintenance and repairs, a visit for May has been arranged with one of the companies
- Homs Road Car Park – report on income generation for future meeting

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/04#25**

**Town Clerk’s Report**

*To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)*

- War Memorial – the refurbishment work to the War Memorial was completed in March – the completion forms to the Trust for the grant have been returned and payment has been received
- Dean Hill Park – The application for first registration is in hand but there is a long backlog of work at HMLR
- Weather Station maintenance – the painting of the tower steps has been completed and the invoice paid by the Met Office
- Ross Tennis Centre has sought consent for a notice board to be fixed to the outside of the pavilion – information has been sought as to the design/dimensions
- Homs Road – Valuation Office Agency has concluded the review of the rateable value for NNDR purposes and there has been a minimal rise leaving an increase in the rates demand for the coming year
- Information from government figures on council tax levels for 2022/23 was noted

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/04#26**

**Town Clerk’s Delegated Powers.**

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

*The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.*

Nothing to report

**FP22/04#27**

**Finance**

iii) *to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2021/2022.*

The Sub-Committee proposed to recommend to the Management Committee that the unspent budgets for the Market House be transferred to the Property Portfolio EMR.

**Received and Noted**

iv) *to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts.*

**Received and Noted**

- v) *to approve expenditure for the purchase of two laptops at a cost of £2090 plus vat from the Equipment/Admin Budget 2022/23 (Nom 4185/101).*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Symonds

**RESOLVED – to approve expenditure for two laptops as proposed.**

**FP22/04#28 Corn Exchange Façade - Repairs to Stonework**

- i) to receive and consider the report and recommendations from Heritage Stone Access dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022 on the Corn Exchange dentils.*  
*ii) to discuss the Architect's drawing of the Façade Elevation and Detail Sections.*  
*iii) to review the proposed costings and agree next steps.*

Members were reminded that should any proposed work be carried out, it would be necessary to compete the tender and that the Architect would need to draw up a specification.

Given the likely cost of the renovation, the need for a sound business case was recognised and it was noted this should be part of a wider discussion once the review of the Council's property portfolio had been undertaken.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

**RESOLVED – to note there are no immediate safety concerns in relation to the condition of the façade but approval to remove the dentils as a preventative measure should be sought by making a Listed Building Consent Application.**

**FP22/04#29 Fixed Assets** [Deferred from 8<sup>th</sup> February Meeting FP22/02#13]

*To receive and note the written report on Fixed Assets and consider and approve the updated register of Assets for Financial Year 2021/22 [subject to any other additions to year end].*

The Sub-Committee discussed the Register, there were questions asked about the recorded value of some of the Council's properties. A request to circulate the current schedule of insurance values was made and Councillors were reminded the insurance renewal date was 1<sup>st</sup> August and that further information about the values and cover would be made available nearer the time.

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

**RESOLVED – to approve the updated Register of Assets for the Financial Year 2021/22.**

**FP22/04#30 Data Security Recommendations Referred by Full Council 22/02#20**

*To review the Officer Recommendations and approve the proposed changes to internal communications between officers and councillors in order to improve electronic security arrangements.*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
For: 4 Abs : 1

Seconded: Councillor Symonds

**RESOLVED – to approve the recommendations on a trial basis and review in six months.**



**FP22/04#31 CCTV**

- i) to receive and note the report from Herefordshire Council's (HC) CCTV Compliance Manager.*
- ii) to authorise the Clerk to continue with investigations with HC to extend the system to include cover at the Skatepark, Caroline Symonds Gardens and the Ropewalk.*
- iii) to seek external capital funding through the Community Safety Partnership (CSP).*

The Report was noted however questions were asked about arrangements in other towns and how the 'Team' model operated.

The Sub-Committee was advised that investigations had revealed there were no funding opportunities through the CSP. Enquiries would be made as to whether a grant from the 'Safer Streets' scheme might be available.

Up to date quotes from HC had been sought in relation to the proposed extension of the system and a further report to the Sub-Committee would be made in due course.

Proposed: Councillor Stark  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Symonds

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report and approve further investigations are carried out into costings and funding opportunities.**

**FP22/04#32 To consider how the Council can provide financial support and other assistance to residents and voluntary groups when international refugees fleeing conflict have been displaced and move into the community of Ross-on-Wye.**

The Chairman reported that he had been approached by several councillors for a response to the comments which had been raised at the March Management meeting about the Ukraine conflict. It was recognised that providing support to refugees was something which government was ultimately responsible for through funding to the Disasters Emergency Committee. The Town Council would direct limited resources to local communities when refugees are housed in Ross and the surrounding areas through support available with the Grants policy. Any application for grant funding would be kindly looked on and conditions relaxed to allow multiple applications in any one year, which would be assessed on a case by case basis.

It was noted that other councils were making direct contributions towards supporting the humanitarian crisis. Councillors were advised that further information from NALC had been circulated which advised for councils with the General Power of Competence this would enable a donation outside the UK to be made.

Councillors recognised the people of Ross had been moved by the predicament of the people of Ukraine but were also aware there are crisis' in other areas too. A donation would be a gesture of solidarity for those fleeing persecution and suffering at this time.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to approve a recommendation to the May Full Council meeting to donate £10k from the General Reserves towards the Disasters Emergency Committee for Ukraine and to positively support people locally through multiple applications to the Grant's Scheme for those who are supporting refugees coming to Ross.**

**FP22/04#33 Market House Working Group**

[Councillors Lister, O’Driscoll, and Utting]

(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

*To receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase*

Councillors were notified that the application for Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent is in hand and should be lodged with Historic England before Easter. In tandem with this the specification and tender arrangements are being looked at to ensure that the tender process can be entered into as soon as possible.

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/04#34 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item**

**(Item FP22/04#22 above refers)**

**Commercial in Confidence**

*To receive feedback on the Clerk’s meeting with a Land Agent about commissioning a report on the Council’s Property Portfolio.*

The Clerk reported a meeting had taken place in March to discuss the content and scope of the proposed report. A fee proposal would be available for discussion at the next meeting.

**FP22/04#35 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration**

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Review the Annual Governance & Accountability Return

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm

.....  
Chairman

.....  
Date



# Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the  
Finance & Property Sub-Committee  
held on Tuesday 7th June 2022 at 7.00pm  
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors C Bartrum, E O'Driscoll, and L Stark  
Ex Officio: Councillor J Utting (Chairman)  
In attendance: Mrs S Robson - Town Clerk  
There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

## FP22/06#36 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

Councillors S Cole and P Symonds

**RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.**

Absent – Councillor Fowler

## FP22/06#37 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

None

## FP22/06#38 Dispensations

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

## FP22/06#39 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

## FP22/06#40 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public - To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (**Commercial in Confidence**).

[Public Bodies \[Admission to Meetings\] Act 1960](#)

Proposed: Councillor Utting

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

Unanimous

**RESOLVED – that agenda item FP22/06#53 - 'Commercial in Confidence' be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.**

## FP22/06#41 Election of Deputy Finance & Property Sub-Committee Chairman

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

For: 3 Abstention: 1

**RESOLVED – to appoint Councillor Stark to be the Deputy Chairman of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee**

**FP22/06#42 Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes**

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

*To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022.*

**RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022 be signed as a correct record.**

**FP22/06#43 Action Review Summary**

*To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.*

- St Mary's Closed Churchyard/Deanhill Park wall maintenance – the advert on Contracts Finder not actioned yet
- Market House Lease – draft received for checking
- Homs Road Car Park – report on income generation for future meeting
- Corn Exchange Façade – enquiries about Listed Building Consent are ongoing
- CCTV – Site visit by HC and other stakeholders w/c 6<sup>th</sup> June to ascertain viability of project. A costed proposal will be presented in due course.

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/06#44 Town Clerk's Report**

*To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)*

- Ross Tennis Centre has confirmed plans to upgrade the existing floodlights – councillors requested that replacement bulbs be of an equivalent wattage/warmth

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/06#45 Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.**

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

*The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.*

The Clerk reported that expenditure for the Conde Twinning Association reception had been authorised under delegated authority to a value of £375.00. The invoice would be paid from the Twinning Budget (Nom 4660/110).

**RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.**

**FP22/06#46 Finance**

*vi) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2022/2023.*  
**Received and Noted**

*vii) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts.*  
**Received and Noted**

*viii) to approve expenditure in the sum of £1000.00 plus vat to carry out works on the Market House Clock to repair, adjust, and reset the pendulum regulator*

The Clerk advised that three quotes had been received and site visits undertaken by several specialist clock repairers.

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to approve expenditure in the sum of £1000.00 from the Building Maintenance and Repairs Budget.**

*ix) to approve an annual service contract in the sum of £185.00 plus vat for the Market House Clock*

The Clerk reported that investigations via a number of different sources had been carried out to identify a range of options. The contractor identified had provided a number of documents to evidence their suitability.

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to approve an annual service contract for the Market House Clock.**

**FP21/06#47 Bank Reconciliations**

[Financial Regulations Clause 2.2](#)

*To receive verbal confirmation from the appointed verifier that the bank reconciliations have been checked to the Council's bank statements and cashbooks for the fourth quarter 2021/2022.*

An email from Cllr Fowler was read out which confirmed that the necessary checks had been made and everything had been completed satisfactorily.

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/02#48 Finance - Bank Reconciliations – Appointed Verifier 2022/2023**

[Financial Regulations Clause 2.2](#)

*To appoint a verifier in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

**RESOLVED – to re-appoint Cllr Fowler as the Council's Appointed Verifier for the financial year 2022/2023**

**FP22/06#49 Internal Audit 2021/2022**

*i) to receive and consider the Final Internal Audit Report (2021/22) and accept and note the conclusions.*

Councillors asked whether the arrangements for remote assessments would continue and noted that all GDPR requirements were met. The office staff were thanked for their work and the resultant clean bill of health following the internal audit.

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

*ii) to confirm the there is a sound and appropriate range of internal control measures in place.*

The Chairman of the Sub-Committee confirmed he would be happy to confirm the sound system of internal control measures which were in place.

**FP22/06#50 Finance – Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR)**

*To receive and review the Council's External Audit Return.*

The Chairman of the Sub-Committee proposed that he would be happy to recommend to Full Council, acceptance of the AGAR at the June meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report and recommend to Full Council acceptance of the AGAR.**

**FP22/06#51 Finance – Banking Arrangements**

*To approve recommendation by the Responsible Financial Officer in relation to proposed changes to the Council's arrangements for banking.*

Proposed: Councillor O'Driscoll  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

**RESOLVED – to accept the officer recommendations as follows;**

1. To arrange transfer of the two accounts currently held at the Santander Bank to Lloyds Bank.
2. To set up an electronic payment process to allow for a two-phase input and authentication system whereby staff would be authorised to make on-line payments.
3. To arrange for a new Debit Card to be issued to the Responsible Financial Officer with limits set in line with approvals under delegated authority.
4. To approve changes to the Council's policies to facilitate on-line payments and use of a debit card.

**FP22/06#52 Market House Working Group**

[Councillors Lister, O'Driscoll, and Utting]  
(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

*To receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase*

Councillors were notified that the application for Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent was submitted on 16<sup>th</sup> May, the response from Historic England is anticipated shortly. In tandem with this the specification and tender arrangements are being looked at to ensure that the tender process can be entered into as soon as possible. It was noted that the Architects would take responsibility for licensing arrangements a reminder to ensure internal decoration of the upstairs of the Market House should be included in the tender. The Working Group agreed to set up a meeting with the Architects during the first week of July to consider the tender documents. It was noted that works were likely to commence next Spring.

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/06#53 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item FP22/06#40 above refers)**

**Commercial in Confidence**

*To consider proposal to commission a written report by a Commercial Land Agent on the Council's Property Portfolio and approve expenditure.*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED- to waive Financial Regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition due to the specialist nature of the work and the existing relationship with the Land Agent engaged by the Council. To approve expenditure in the sum of £2750.00 plus vat to commission a written report.**

**FP22/06#54 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration**

*Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022*

Review the engagement of Internal Auditor

Property Portfolio Review  
Banking arrangements & changes to policies  
Progress Report from the Market House Working Group and options for funding

There being no further business the meeting closed 8.20 pm

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Chairman

.....  
Date



# Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the  
Finance & Property Sub-Committee  
held on Tuesday 6th September 2022 at 7.00pm  
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors C Bartrum, E O'Driscoll, L Stark and P Symonds  
Ex Officio: Councillor J Utting (Chairman)  
In attendance: Mrs S Robson - Town Clerk  
There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

**FP22/09#55 Apologies for Absence**

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)

None

Absent – Councillor S Cole and Councillor K Fowler

**FP22/09#56 Declarations of Interest**

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

None

**FP22/09#57 Dispensations**

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)

None

**FP22/09#58 Public Participation**

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

None

**FP22/09#59 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public**

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

*To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

Proposed: Councillor Utting

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

Unanimous

**RESOLVED – that agenda item FP22/09#71 - 'Commercial Confidence' be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.**

**FP22/09#60 Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes**

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)

*To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022.*

**RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property**



**Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022 be signed as a correct record.**

**FP22/09#61 Action Review Summary**

*To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.*

- St Mary's Closed Churchyard/Deanhill Park wall maintenance – no further progress
- Market House Lease – draft approved for preparation
- Homs Road Car Park report on income generation – no further progress
- Corn Exchange Façade – enquiries about Listed Building Consent are ongoing
- Transfer of Bank account – recommendation to September Full Council meeting, Financial Regulations were reviewed at July meeting

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/09#62 Town Clerk's Report**

*To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)*

- Electricity rate rise - increased electric tariffs published, at present the company is unable to quote due to the volatility of the market
- CCTV – capital costs for 3 new cameras received, the quote exceeds the budget allocation. Enquiries to be made to establish potential alternatives
- Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVC) – HC intend to install new charge points at its car parks. The steep rise in electric costs at Redmeadow toilets does not appear consistent with the Chargemaster EVC dashboard information, further investigations to be carried out
- RTC/RTA Websites, new contract for maintenance, hosting and support being negotiated due to the previous company no longer trading

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/09#63 Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.**

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

*The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.*

The Clerk reported that expenditure in the sum of £2110.00 plus VAT for repairs to the Wye St. toilet roof had been authorised as the insurance claim had been refused. Three quotes had been obtained.

Councillors expressed their dissatisfaction at the refusal of the insurance claim and requested that a complaint be raised with the insurer and if necessary escalated to the Ombudsman.

Expenditure in the sum of £1180.00 plus VAT was authorised to repair the damaged locks and coin entry system at the toilet block in Red Meadow car park.

**RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.**

**FP22/09#64 Finance**

*x) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2022/2023.*

**Received and Noted**

*xi) to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts.*

**Received and Noted**

**FP22/09#65 Finance - Bank Reconciliations**

*Financial Regulations Clause 2.2*

*To receive verbal confirmation from the appointed verifier that the bank reconciliations have been checked to the Council's bank statements and cashbooks for the first quarter 2022/2023.*

This item to be deferred to the next meeting as the necessary checks had not been carried out.

The Sub-Committee agreed it would be useful to appoint a deputy verifier and that a recommendation should be made at the next Full Council meeting – Cllr Utting expressed a willingness to be appointed.

**FP22/09#66 Finance – Internal Audit Arrangements commencing financial year 2022/2023**

*i) to confirm and note the expiration of the previous contract for the Council's Internal Audit provision.*

The Sub-Committee in accordance with the Agreement of Terms dated 18/04/2018 wished to confirm cancellation of the Contract with Auditing Solutions in accordance with the resolution FP18/04#35.

*ii) to receive report and consider recommendations in relation to the engagement of a new internal audit contract for a four-year period.*

Members considered the Clerk's report that detailed the options and costs. The quote from 'supplier 2' was preferred due to the size of the organisation and the need to consider appropriate contingency measures if a sole trader was appointed. The Members agreed the proposed audit arrangements looked thorough and matched the Council's expectations and approach to risk management.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to engage Auditing Solutions for a four-year Contract to provide internal audit services at an annual maximum cost of £960 plus vat.**

**FP22/09#67 Finance - External Audit Arrangements**

*To discuss option to opt out of the Smaller Authority Audit Appointments (SAAA) central external auditor appointment arrangements.*

The Sub-Committee considered the written submission from SAAA and the practicalities and cost of opting out of the current scheme.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED – that the Council would remain within the SAAA arrangements for the provision of external audit.**

**FP22/09#68 Finance - Insurance Renewal Review**

*To receive and note confirmation of the insurance renewal arrangements with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022.*

The Sub-Committee was appraised of the short turnaround time in renewing the insurance as the market had found itself in a difficult position with reduced capacity and increased ratings. Some companies were no longer writing new business and the Broker was left having to go to the market to obtain a new scheme provider. The Sub-Committee was advised that Aviva had offered the best value terms but with the local authority sector having been significantly under priced for a long time the market had become volatile. This had resulted in a 75% increase in the premium for the Council's cover. A 3 year Long Term Agreement had been secured.

**RESOLVED - to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/09#69 Property – Toilet Blocks (Red Meadow and Wye Street)**

- i) to consider entry into the Loo of the Year Award at a maximum cost of £173.00 per block*
- ii) to consider application to subscribe to the Tearfund Toilet Twinning Scheme at a maximum cost of £240.00 per block.*

The Sub-Committee liked the proposal and the idea of support for improving sanitary conditions in developing countries but recognised there was no budget allocated for the current financial year.

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

**RESOLVED – to set aside funding in the 2023/24 budget for the project.**

**FP22/09#70 Property - Market House Working Group**

[Councillors Lister, O'Driscoll, and Utting]  
(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

*To receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase*

The Chairman reported that the suite of documents provided by the firm of architects had been professionally put together, there were some minor changes necessary which could be easily sorted out.

It was agreed that the Clerk would start to approach bid writers for terms and quotations.

A meeting of the Working Group to be arranged during w/c September 11<sup>th</sup> to agree next steps.

**RESOLVED - to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/09#71 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item FP22/09#59 above refers)**

**Commercial in Confidence**

*To receive a verbal progress report on the Council's property portfolio review.*

The Clerk confirmed that a number of meetings with the Agent had taken place to review options and consider the Council's requirements. A written report would be available shortly.

**FP22/09#72 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration**

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022

New CCTV cameras/Electric Vehicle Charge point at Red Meadow toilets/Budget Draft

There being no further business the meeting closed 8.25pm

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Chairman

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Date



# Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the  
Finance & Property Sub-Committee  
held on Tuesday 15th November 2022 at 7.00pm  
at The Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5HL

Present: Councillors L Delves, E O'Driscoll, and L Stark  
Ex Officio: Councillor J Utting (Chairman)  
In attendance: Mrs S Robson - Town Clerk  
There were no members of the public and no members of the press present.

**FP22/11#73 Apologies for Absence**

[Local Government Act 1972 s85 \(1\)](#)  
Councillors C Bartrum and P Symonds  
**RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.**  
Absent – Councillors S Cole and K Fowler

**FP22/11#74 Declarations of Interest**

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)  
None

**FP22/11#75 Dispensations**

[Standing Orders Clause 13](#)  
None

**FP22/11#76 Public Participation**

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)  
None

**FP22/11#77 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public**

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)  
*To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

Proposed: Councillor O'Driscoll  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

**RESOLVED – that agenda item FP22/11#91 - 'Commercial Confidence' be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.**

**FP22/11#78 Finance & Property Sub-Committee Meeting - Minutes**

[Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 Para 41\(1\)](#)  
*To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022.*

**RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 be signed as a correct record.**

**FP22/11#79 Action Review Summary**

*To receive and review Outstanding Actions Summary.*

- St Mary's Closed Churchyard/Deanhill Park wall maintenance – no further progress
- Market House Lease – draft approved for preparation. Enquiries to be made with the insurance company for confirmation of cover during this interim period
- Homs Road Car Park report on income generation – no further progress, awaiting decision regarding VAT as there will be implications for the Council
- Corn Exchange Façade – Listed Building Consent would not be granted to remove the dentils. It was agreed to defer any decision until discussions on the future use of the Corn Exchange are concluded. Councillors recognised the responsibility to maintain assets on behalf of the wider community and in keeping with the historic environment of the town
- Transfer of Bank account – in progress
- Insurance company complaint – RSA confirmed decision to decline claim. The Committee asked for the complaint to be escalated to the Financial Ombudsman Service

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/11#80 Town Clerk's Report**

*To receive and note update from Town Clerk (for information only)*

- Aviva has requested a site visit to the Larruperz to conduct an insurance survey
- CCTV – further investigations have been made into the possibility of a stand alone system. Whilst the capital costs looked favourable a number of key advantages would be lost in moving away from the HC system. Firm costings to be brought back to either the December Management Committee or January F&P for the Ropewalk and Caroline Symonds Garden sites only, as the Skatepark installation costs are prohibitive
- Local Government Pension Scheme – March 2022 Actuarial Valuation Results have shown the town and parish councils fund has moved from a deficit position and at its current valuation is fully funded
- The local law firm used by the Council for professional services is being taken over by a national law firm, local offices in Ross and Lydney will remain open, and the firm will now be able to offer a broader spread of services

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/11#81 Town Clerk's Delegated Powers.**

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

*The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.*

The Clerk reported that a new contract for the office copier had been signed and some cost savings had been made.

Insurance cover for the new Christmas lights and digital notice boards had resulted in an additional premium of £74.34

**RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.**

**FP22/11#82 Finance**

*xii) to receive the Year-to-Date income and expenditure report for the Budget 2022/2023.*

**Received and Noted**

xiii) *to receive the Balance Sheet and note bank account balances and funds in earmark reserve and general reserve accounts.*

The Chairman noted the call on the General Reserve at the financial year end might be in the region of £50/80k. The Committee was advised that the Clerk would be preparing a financial out turn during December which would offer a better indication of the year end position.

**Received and Noted**

**FP22/11#83 Finance - Bank Reconciliations**

[Financial Regulations Clause 2.2](#)

*To receive verbal confirmation from the appointed verifier that the bank reconciliations have been checked to the Council's bank statements and cashbooks for the first quarter 2022/2023.*

Councillor Utting reported he had concluded checks for the period April – September 2022 and confirmed he was satisfied that the accounts were in order.

**RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.**

**FP22/11#84 Finance – Internal Audit 2022/2023**

*To receive and accept the Interim Internal Audit Report dated 19th October 2022 and consider the conclusions.*

The Auditor's comment in relation to unbudgeted expenditure were discussed, the Committee was satisfied that no other issues had been identified.

Proposed: Councillor Stark  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to receive and accept the report.**

**FP22/11#85 Finance – VAT**

*To authorise expenditure to a maximum of £3375.00 plus vat to engage a VAT specialist for the commissioning of a report to advise on*

*i) the Council's current and potential future VAT liability on its income*

*ii) to identify whether there is any need to register for VAT and an analysis as to the cost benefit*

*iii) investigate how to mitigate current exposure to partial exemption by techniques such as 'opting to tax'*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to authorise expenditure for the commissioning of a report to advise the Council on VAT implications in relation to current and future service provision and income generation.**

**FP22/11#86 Budget**

[Financial Regulations \(Section 3 Annual Estimates and Forward Planning\)](#)

- *agree the one-year budget forecast as part of the 2023/ 2024 budget submission,*
- *ensure that any capital project (including building maintenance) has an appropriate project plan identifying the schedule of works (to an appropriate level of detail) and the source of funds e.g., budget or reserves,*
- *identify impact of capital projects on revenue budget for the first 5 years.*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

The Committee discussed the process for approving the budget and agreed it would go to the January Management Committee meeting for scrutiny with approval for setting the budget at a Full Council meeting in February.

**RESOLVED – to confirm the proposed one-year budget for financial year 2023/2024 and to agree recommendations to Full Council for the budget.**

**FP22/11#87 Property – Corn Exchange**

*To authorise expenditure to a maximum of £3000.00 plus vat from the F&P Projects Budget to approve works to repair and replace the roof slates and clean out and repair the internal down pipe.*

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

**RESOLVED – to approve the expenditure to a maximum of £3000 for the works to the Corn Exchange roof and internal down pipe.**

**FP22/11#88 Property – Red Meadow Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVC)**

*To accept the notice from BP Pulse to terminate the Chargemaster legacy agreement for the ECV point on the basis that the point is no longer commercially viable.*

The Committee was advised that HC is extending the on street charge points in town and has plans to install new fast chargers in their car parks. Confirmation of the locations has been sought.

**RESOLVED - to receive and accept the Notice to Terminate.**

**FP22/11#89 Property – Toilet Blocks**

- to review the income received from the coin operated door entry system*
- to consider retro fitting a card reader at a cost of*

- *contactless only      £6800.00*
- *contactless add-on    £6400.00*

The Committee was broadly in favour of fitting the contactless add-on card reader and agreed in principle it could be funded from the Property Portfolio Sinking Fund. The Clerk agreed to investigate charges for sim card/broadband connections and report back to the January Meeting to enable a decision to be taken.



**FP22/11#90 Property - Market House Working Group**

[Councillors Lister, O’Driscoll, and Utting]  
(Terms of reference – PM20/02#14)

*i) to receive a verbal report on progress to date and proposed next phase*

The Chairman reported that the tender process for appointing a contractor had commenced and that a meeting with the Architects had been scheduled after the deadline for receipt.

*ii) to authorise expenditure to engage a professional bid writer*

Proposed: Councillor Stark  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

**RESOLVED – to appoint Wootton George Consulting at a maximum cost of £9200 plus vat to engage them for the purposes of making an application for an external funding bid to enable the works at the Market House to go ahead.**

**FP22/11#91 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item FP22/11#77 above refers)**

**Commercial in Confidence**

*To receive and consider the written report on the Council’s property portfolio.*

The Committee received and noted the written report on the Asset Management Review and agreed to defer further debate until the January meeting.

Initial thoughts were to consider how the first floor of the Corn Exchange might be re-configured to improve the lay out.

The Committee agreed in principle that a commercial lease of the Old Chapel to Herefordshire Council would be favourably considered.

Proposed: Councillor Utting  
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

**FP22/11#92 To confirm date of next scheduled meeting of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee and propose items for consideration**

Date of next ordinary meeting – Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Update on Market House tender and progress on work towards the external funding bid.

There being no further business the meeting closed 8.55pm

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Chairman

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Date